

COMMUNION

BEING IN CREATION: 'COMMUNION OR DOMINANCE?'

Our Scriptures begin with a prophetic vision of the garden of harmony that God intends for all humanity and all creation – but that harmony we are constantly rejecting, we cannot cope with. So we spoil it and leave to build our own self-centred and wounded world.

In our urban world we hardly notice the glorious rhythm of the seasons – the death of winter beginning to yield the flowering of New Life; the springtime of beauty and growth giving way to the harvest of fulness as the sun reaches its summer zenith; the transitoriness of fulfilment as the decaying and declining of autumn sets in; and finally the onslaught of the deep death sleep of winter when we touch emptiness and meaninglessness. The ancients were so at one with this rhythm of creation that they saw in it the struggle of the gods, their dying and rebirthing and the endless, meaningless struggle between light and darkness, death and life continues. As Pope Francis has reminded us (in the recent Pan-Amazon Synod), we need to rediscover and learn 'communion with Creation' from our indigenous sisters and brothers (e.g. of the Amazon basin), in order to 'heal' creation from the ravages of human exploitation.

We are the people whose faith speaks of hope: that creation has purpose and goal. (see John 1: 1-5; Romans 8: 14-25; Eph 1: 8-10; Col 1: 15-20; Christ Alpha and Omega in Rev: 1: 8 & 21: 1-6) That our little lives in this great cosmos are indeed significant, God-touched, God-loved. Yet this very life-giving faith, this burning hope, this embrace of creating love of which we are a part, has too often led us to control and dominate, rather than to walk in harmony and feel the rhythm of creation within and around us. And so, our precious gifts and talent for science and technology has too often not enhanced but wounded our earth, polluted our seas, and starved our sisters and brothers. We are obsessed with 'development' for profit, rapid return on investments and ignoring the suicidal harm we are inflicting on ourselves and future generations by not living in harmony with the 'rhythms of creation'. We call the indigenous peoples of forest and savannah, of coast and desert – primitive. Yet they listen to the trees and the wind-swept deserts and bend to their call and walk to their rhythm. Perhaps too late and too little we are to learn from them.

In the silence listen to the earth – it is in your heart, your body, beneath your feet, before your eyes – let it enter your soul that you might live again. Worship the Creator who is still creating and wants to draw you into sharing the divine task of co-creating. Listen to the call of creation for in it you will hear the voice of the Creator and the cry of your own creativity.

SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION

Genesis 1: 27 and 2: 7-9, 18-20

God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them...

The Lord God shaped man from the soil of the ground and blew the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being. God planted a garden in Eden, and there he put the man he had fashioned.. From the soil the Lord God caused to grow every kind of tree, enticing to look at and good to eat...

And the Lord God said 'It is not right that the man should be alone. I shall make him a helper.' So from the soil, the Lord God fashioned all the wild animals and all the birds of heaven. These he brought to the man to see what he would call them; each one was to bear the name the man would give it. And the man gave names to all the creatures.

Romans 8: 18-23

In my estimation, all that we suffer in this present time is nothing in comparison with the glory which is destined to be disclosed for us, for the whole creation is waiting with eagerness for the children of God to be revealed. His intention is that the whole creation itself might be freed from its slavery to corruption and brought into the same glorious freedom as the children of God. We are well aware that the whole creation until this time has been groaning in labour pains. Not only that: we too, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we are groaning inside ourselves, waiting with eagerness to be set free.

Reflections from the parish of St Nicholas of Tolentino

